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IN

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ROSEAU

WILLIAM  
S  
BIRGE





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# IN OLD ROSEAU.

Reminiscences of Life as I Found It in  
the Island of Dominica, and Among  
the Carib Indians.

BY  
WILLIAM S. BIRGE, M.D.

*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.*

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## PART I.

# Depicting Life as I Found It in the Island of Dominica.







# DEDICATION.

TO MY WIFE,

Who has been a constant companion and help through years of a busy professional life, this little book is dedicated with a feeling of respect and honest affection.

## INTRODUCTION.

This little book was written in the beginning as a relaxation from the worry and care of an active professional life, and to recall to mind the many pleasant and varied incidents narrated herein. It was not intended for publication, but at the solicitation of friends, who have been entertained by its perusal, saying that it differed so materially from the ordinary humdrum book of travel, I have consented to place it in the hands of the publisher.

A few of the chapters have appeared in print before, but these have been rewritten and, for the most part, materially changed, particularly a portion of the first chapter, which was written in conjunction with a friend and formed an article in a guide-book of West Indian travel. For some of the statistics and other information furnished, I am indebted to various sources, among others Ober's incomparable work on the Carribean Islands.

I make no pretensions of any literary effort, but have tried to make the book readable, and incite in the minds of its readers an interest in, and an admiration for, one of the most beautiful islands in the world. It is not too highly colored, for the pen of the most gifted writer cannot do justice to this tropical isle of the sea. One of the few places, if, indeed, such can be said to exist on this earth, that might truly be entitled to the synonym of God's country.

*Provincetown, Mass., May 30, 1900.*

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# IN OLD ROSEAU.

## CHAPTER I.

### AN IDYL OF THE CARRIBEAN.

“My dream is of an island place,  
By distant seas kept lonely,  
A little island, on whose face  
The stars are watchers only.”

[In the fine old days when the history of the West Indies and the Spanish Main was fraught with romance and tragedy, those islands running in a crescent shape from Trinidad, on the south, to the Virgin Islands, on the north, were known as the Windward Islands. The Leeward Islands were, and properly speaking are, another cluster, lying off the coast of Venezuela from Magarita to Oruba.] The Britishers owned none of these, and to make themselves happier, divided their Windward chain and called the northern part the Leeward Islands. This has been the cause of confusion and misunderstanding. When I read of the Windward Islands I do not know to what the author refers; when someone speaks of the Leeward Islands, I am at a loss to understand. The changes which have taken place these later years in the time of fast

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steamships and much going are discouraging to the lovers of old books of travel. It was in the days before the poetry of the deep had been sent swirling astern out of sight by the propeller that the Windward Islands *were* the Windward Islands. "The glory and the dream has gone," says W. Clark Russell; "the demon of steam has possessed with its spirit the interior of the sailing ship, and from the eyes of the nautical occupants of that combination of ore and wire, that ocean visionary life which was the substance and sum of sea calling has utterly faded. A man is taken from port to port with railroad punctuality. He is swept headlong through calms and storms. The mantle of mystery has been lifted by the hand of discovery, and the superstition and fear begotten of intrusion into the obscure and unknown and the magic that was in them is gone."

But, perhaps, the elimination of poetry from the sea life by the pounding of the steam engine and the swift voyage, is more deplorable on land than it is on the ocean itself. Let us admit that it is. Most likely we shall then be willing to hasten on, borne by the very impolite, but very comfortable, iron steamship.

In no part of the ocean are voyages attended with so much enjoyment as in the Southern Sea, and anything pleasanter, more lotus-bearing, more

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Eden-like, than the Carribean Islands can hardly be. Deep in emerald valleys, hemmed in by ravine and precipice, overhung with towering tree ferns and the glassy and quaint leaf of the wild plantain, moist with the daily showers that suddenly sweep down like white curtains from the dark and jagged heights overhead, to be as suddenly followed by the hot sunshine of the cloudless blue, until every form of vegetable life springs up and flourishes in a confused plenitude of beauty—a veritable paradise, indeed!

In these West Indian Islands you live in a climate averaging 80°. The air has no longer any harshness or asperity. It feels soft and bland to the skin. Every breath is healing. You are beside a tinted and eye-delighting ocean, where soft breezes are constant and strengthening; amid lovely scenes of vivid and varied hues, and beneath fair, solemn and deep blue skies, whose brief sunsets are glorious beyond the painting of words, and whose prismatic stars glow like steel when not quenched by the most mellow and brightest of moonlights. The mind partakes of the tranquility of it all, and year by year after you have come away you will look back to those verdant hills, to those palm-bordered roads, to that purple and rosy sea, to those brilliant noons and beautiful nights, to the charming climate, and you will

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come to understand with the sympathy of experience the answer made me by an accomplished Creole, whose acquirements fitted him for higher positions than he could find to fill in the islands, when I asked him why he did not seek more accessible and worthy fortunes elsewhere. "Ah," he said, looking up to heaven all aglow with the morning light, "I cannot live away from the tropic sun!"

Dominica is the real elysium of the Carribean Islands. The hand of nature has there disseminated her richest treasures. Pleasure and repose there find the sweetest security.

Let one ascend the mountains back of Roseau, and one cannot help gazing with enthusiastic admiration on the beauties by which one is surrounded, on the perfect picture whose loveliness meets one's view at every turn. Below, extending as far as the eye can reach, are the tranquil waters of the Carribean, glistening in the beams of the southern sun. North and south, the valleys glow in the same life-giving splendor, the mountain springs gushing forth in very wantonness, and the beautiful foliage of the various tropical trees and plants clothing the sides of the mountain and the valley below, beyond which, extending along the water's edge, lies the sombre old town itself. The breezes, redolent with perfume and freshened by

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the waves over which they are wafted, will bear with them a coolness more than delicious. Nothing is wanting for the perfect unity of loveliness, the natural enchantment of the scene.

Dominica is thirty miles in length by eleven miles in breadth, and, owing to its numerous mountain ranges, presents a more uneven surface than any other island in the West Indies. When Columbus was asked by the queen to describe its general appearance, he crumpled a sheet of paper in his hand and threw it on the table. In no better way could he clearly convey his own idea.

This island, like most of the group, is of volcanic formation; but the only active evidence of that character now existing is in the numerous boiling sulphur springs found there, and far in the interior on the almost inaccessible mountain is a boiling sulphur lake, which Ober, in his work on the Caribbees, describes as being from 300 to 400 feet in diameter, although no actual measurements have ever been made. Its temperature varies. When Mr. Ober saw it, he found it to be  $96^{\circ}$ , although when examined some months previous by Dr. Nichols, of Roseau, it was found to be  $196^{\circ}$ . Its depth has never been ascertained. Some years ago it suddenly emptied itself, blowing high into the air like a geyser, and destroying the forest for several miles around and frightening the native

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inhabitants nearly to death. Since that time it has gradually filled up again, until at present it has assumed its old proportions. It is safely approachable, but difficult of access, much of the journey having to be performed on foot through a mass of tropical vegetation that would try the patience of a saint, if such an individual were ever to be found traveling through the West Indies.

Far back on the Atlantic side of the island, bordering on the Mahoe River, is the reservation of the Carib Indians, the remnant of a once powerful nation. They number between three and four hundred, and live in a very quiet, peaceful manner. Their chief occupation is making the pannier, or Carib basket, which is much sought after by the natives of all these islands. These baskets vary in size from a small hand-bag to a large trunk. They are made in a peculiar manner, from a reed called Mahoe, and are so tight that they will hold water. They are durable, and with proper care will last for years. The price varies according to the size, some of the larger ones bringing as much as five dollars. It is seldom that a Carib Indian will visit the towns, and then only to dispose of his baskets and purchase supplies. It is said that there are numbers of the tribe who have never left the reservation.

The principal town and capital of the island is

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Roseau. It is a quaint, sombre-looking place, with its long line of sea wall, built of solid stone, ten feet in thickness. The houses, too, have a solid look, the principal ones being wholly or in part built of stone. This does not apply to the native habitations, which are much the same in all the West Indian Islands—simply boxes of wood fifteen or twenty feet square, covered with bonnet or thatched roofs. Roseau is a very healthy city and no offensive sights or sounds are to be encountered. There has been no epidemic sickness for years, and very few cases of fever are to be found. There is an excellent hospital situated on Morne Bruce, about two miles from the city, where the poor of the island receive treatment free. It is open daily for the inspection of visitors, and an hour devoted to it is well spent. One ward will be found especially interesting, as it is occupied entirely by patients afflicted with the yaws, a skin disease confined entirely to the negroes, and which manifests itself by an eruption more or less over the entire body. As soon as a native is attacked with this disease he is immediately taken to the hospital, whether he will or no, where he is put on a wholesome diet and under general treatment, when he soon recovers.

The streets of Roseau are free from wheeled vehicles of any kind. Indeed, there is only one

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carriage in the whole island, and that, like the old fort, in whose courtyard it may be seen, is a thing of the past. The reason for this is easily explained. In the town itself the cobblestone pavements would so shake up a man's interior were he to drive over them, that it would be simply impossible to stand it; and outside of the town there are no carriage roads whatever. So that it is go on horseback or go on foot. There are many excellent horses on the island, however, and it is really a pleasure to mount one of them and take a ride into the country.

One point of interest in Roseau is the old fort. It is on a hill leading directly up from the water's edge, and commands a magnificent view of the harbor. Many years ago it was garrisoned with troops, and was considered one of the strongest fortresses on the islands; but those times have long since passed away, and the old fort, like the town itself, is a relic of by-gone days. The structure is still very solid, and it will be a long time before the hand of time will destroy it. It is now used for police barracks, and the present inspector takes pleasure in keeping the grounds and premises in a neat condition. They are mostly set out to flowers, shrubs and fruit-bearing trees, such as the coconut, palm, limes, lemons and Smyrna figs. The inspector is a very genial type of an Englishman.







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He is one of the regular army men on the reserve list. He has fifty men under him in all, about thirty being stationed in Roseau. They are all blacks, and receive, according to rank, a salary of from £20 to £30. They are quite efficient, and the inspector told me that he had little difficulty in preserving complete order throughout the whole island with a population of 28,000. The natives as a class are very peaceable, and most of the arrests are for theft and drunkenness.

There are three religious denominations in the town, the largest of which is the Roman Catholic. The Church of England has a neat little edifice, and is supported by a congregation of about 800. The other, the Wesleyan Methodists, has a small, but zealous, congregation, and is regularly opened every Sunday for day services and twice a week for evening prayer meetings. Out of a population of 28,000 nearly 27,000 are Roman Catholics, and every little hamlet, no matter how remote, will have its church or chapel where services are held. The priests, for the most part, are Irishmen, and a more genial, kind-hearted, self-sacrificing class of men it would be hard to find.

While speaking of churches and ministers, I recall to mind an anecdote in Coleridge's "Six Months in the West Indies," of Mr. Audain, one of the early preachers in the Church of England in

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Roseau. The story is too good to be lost, and I shall repeat it as I remember it. The Reverend Mr. Audain was a patriot; few of his cloth like him. He was not content with praying against the enemies of his country; he fought against them also. St. Peter certainly owned a boat, and the authorized translation (Mr. Audain loved literal orthodoxy) intimates a partnership among some of the apostles in a ship. So Mr. Audain built a schooner and carried on for many years a system of practical polemics with the disputants of the French school, to his own abundant profit and notoriety. Some of the older inhabitants of Roseau can yet remember hearing their parents tell of Audain, with how joyful a rapture this holy Dominican once broke off his service on a Sunday, unable to repress the emotions of his triumph on seeing the vessel of his faith sail into the bay with a dismasted bark laden with sugar, rum and other Gallic vanities from Martinique. It was shortly after this event that the star of Audain began to wax dim. His zeal was equally great, his courage undaunted, but an evil destiny met him at every turn. An acquaintance met him one day in the streets of Basse Terre, in St. Kitts, surrounded by negroes, to whom he was distributing plantains, yams, potatoes and other eatables, and holding private talk with them all by turns. Having caught

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the eye of his friend, he came up to him and said: "I am going to smuggle all these — rascals to Gaudaloupe." He did so in his schooner, but himself remained on shore. A privateer of Nevis captured the smuggler before she could get to the market. Audain became furious, went himself to Nevis and challenged the owner of the privateer to fight. The challenge was not accepted, and Audain immediately posted the name of the recusant on the walls of the court-house as that of a scoundrel. For two days he himself kept watch upon the platform, with sword by his side and four pistols stuck in his belt, to see if anyone dared touch the shield.

Audain fitted out another schooner and sailed in her himself; but fate was too heavy for him, though he struggled against it like a man. On the second day a vessel was seen on the leeward; he found it to be a Spanish trader, and supposing she was wholly unarmed, bore down upon her as upon a certain prey. When he came within pistol shot fourteen masked ports were opened, and as many guns pointed at him through them. Audain was obliged to strike in an instant, and with the carpenter succeeded in secreting himself under some water casks in the hold of the schooner. The Spaniards came on board and cut every man in pieces, except Audain and the carpenter. These

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two lay all night under the casks; but in the morning, upon further search, their asylum was discovered. They were brought on deck and the Spaniards were on the point of hewing them in pieces, when their captain exclaimed with an oath: "Hold on! this man's life is sacred and the other's, too, for his sake." Audain had formerly done the Spaniards great service at St. Thomas, and it now saved his own and the carpenter's life.

Up to this time Audain, though occasionally non-resident for the aforesaid reasons, had continued minister of Roseau. He was a singularly eloquent preacher in the pathetic and suasive style, and he rarely failed to bring down tears upon the cheeks of most of those who heard him. His manners were fine and gentle, and his appearance even venerable. He was hospitable to the rich, and gave alms to the poor. But his repeated losses were such as to bear a royal merchant down, and the Dominicans became more scrupulous, and a Governor came who knew not Audain. So Audain abdicated the pulpit of Roseau.

Privateering and smuggling had failed, so now he commenced honest trade. He went to St. Domingo with a cargo of corn, sold it well and lived on the island. But his star grew fainter and fainter. He quarreled with two black general officers, challenged them, and shot them both se-

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verely. Christopher sent for him, and told him that if the men recovered it were well, but if either of them died he would hang him on the tamarind tree before his own door. Audain thought the men would die, and escaped from the tamarind tree by night in an open boat. He now settled in St. Eustatius, put on his black coat again, and recommenced life a clergyman. St. Eustatius was a free port, yet the division of labor had made surprisingly slow advance in it. There were many religions but few priests in the island when Audain made his appearance there. He had become liberal-minded by misfortune, and he was always actuated by a faith of such immense catholicity that it comprehended within its creed every radiation of opinion from the centre of Christianity, as the fellow embraces the spokes of a wheel. Audain offered to administer to all the sects respectively, which offer the free-traders thankfully accepted. In the morning he celebrated mass in French; in the forenoon read the liturgy of the Church of England; in the afternoon sprackened the Dutch service, and at nightfall chanted to the Methodists. Audain seemed to be again gaining wealth and fame. He was a married man, but his wife resided in England. A Dutch widow—rich, pious and large—cast a widow's eye on Audain. The rigor of Creole widowity softened under the afternoon sprackenings

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of Audain, as Dutch butter melts under the kisses of Titian. She told Audain that if Heaven had made her such a man she would have married twice. The hint was broad as herself, but Audain liked it the better for its dimensions, and married her on the spot, reading the service himself.

Audain fought thirteen duels, and was a good boxer. He lived to a ripe old age, and wholly reformed his manners. He loved his Dutch wife and said his prayers so loud as to disturb his neighbors. His English wife sent him a Christmas box annually. He was a man of infinite talent and had seen the world. If he had written a life of himself, it would have been the most entertaining book of the age; but, like many others whose life has been full of romance, he sank into an oblivion which he did not seem to deserve.

A visit to the market-place, early in the morning, particularly on Saturday, will be interesting, and at the same time show us what the Dominicans live upon. A better market it would be hard to find, and a cheaper one impossible; excellent beef, goat, pork, mutton and fowl can be purchased for from eight to ten cents a pound. Fish of various kinds and delicious flavor, from four to seven cents. All varieties of tropical fruit in abundance, at fabulously low prices. Several times on visiting the market we noticed some pe-



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culiar animals, resembling lizards in appearance, being about two feet in length, and covered all over with brown warts. They were vicious-looking things, and showed their disposition by snapping at every one who passed near them. We were told that they were iguanas, and were considered a great delicacy. The flesh is white and is said to resemble the chicken in flavor, but is more delicate. The market is almost wholly controlled by women, and one will find them of all shades, from the blackest of the black to a light olive tint. They go bare-footed, and their only clothing consists of a dress, a single undergarment, and a bright bandanna handkerchief tied around the head in a manner peculiar to themselves. Their dress is always made with a long train, which is generally looped up and held in place by a cord tied around the loins. They present a very picturesque appearance, and are certainly very noisy, each calling out her wares at the top of her voice and naming the price, some speaking English and others the native patois, which to a stranger is perfectly unintelligible, even though he understand the French language. A few of the market women occupy stands covered over with rough boards, but the large majority are content to squat on the rough stone pavement, their baskets by their side. A little apart from the market proper, in a group by

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themselves, are the charcoal venders, who always have a good trade, for charcoal is the only fuel used in these islands.

The women of Dominica are not so pretty as their sisters in the neighboring island of Martinique. They are generally larger in figure and coarser in feature, and have not the dainty feet and graceful gait of the French belles. They also lack that voluptuous languor which is so characteristic of a Martinique woman. The complexion is generally much darker, and they resemble more the native African type.

The boarding houses of Roseau are excellent, the table such as would suit the most fastidious.

To one who is fond of quiet, likes to live well, enjoys out-of-door life, and loves to commune with nature, we would say go to Dominica. There in that tropical isle of the sea, all is quietness, all is rest. Far from all the tumults and cares of city life, he can truly say that he stands in the midst of a paradise, and has veritably left the world behind him.

## CHAPTER II.

### A CHAPTER OF NO ACCOUNT.

How few people are content in this world of restlessness and strife. The most favored child of fortune is oftenest spoiled. How true it is that the heart constantly longs for something that it has not, even though that longing may be only a cloud to hide for a moment the perpetual sunshine. Thank heaven, we were not of these. I say we, for but a few days before my old-time friend, Tom Paine, who had been spending a month in Martinique, the guest of his uncle, the American consul, had taken a run across to Dominica. He would spend an even week with me before the returning steamer would carry him back to the States.

We were true philosophers, and belonged to that school who had but little as the world goes, and wanted nothing.

We had been discussing the feminine types of these Southern isles of the sea. I was lying at full length under the shade of a fig tree with my jacket for a pillow, and Tom stood a few feet distant with his hands in his pockets, smoking steadily on his briarwood, as though the question was one of the greatest moment.

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"Do you think after all," said I, reverting to the matter-of-fact view of my own mind, which was usually inclined to the romantic; "that these dark-skinned houris, with the most beautiful and languishing eyes, as you call them, are not decidedly inferior to even the average New England girl. Of course, laying aside your own native town of Salem, that I believe has always been noted for its pretty girls. How long would you love a woman that could neither read nor write, and who could not converse intelligently for five minutes on a given subject, and whose knowledge of the outside world is so circumscribed that to define it would be almost ludicrous?" Your brief residence in Martinique must have turned your head, Tom. Here you are, a man of education and refinement, fairly raving about these women who were never even taught their letters."

Tom removed the pipe from between his lips, and began to whistle an air of some favorite piece, which was always a sign that he was displeased, generally with himself.

"Did it never occur to you, Tom," I continued, "that a woman's education is after all the groundwork and secret fascination over man?"

"You are not altogether wrong," said my companion, after smoking in silence for some moments. "The women of the North would, indeed,

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be considered of little account, to say the least, if they had no education, if they could neither read nor write. But the women of these sunny isles is another thing altogether. I am inclined to believe that education would be inconsistent with the clime. Now you have been here in Roseau some little time, but how many times have you, my friend, been guilty of bringing into existence a single new idea or thought? Why, probably not once. Your intellect remains unchanged, and your imagination, I am sure, is not dull. But you know from your own experience, as I know from my own, that it is only from the force of necessity that one acts or thinks in these latitudes. What a glorious existence, old fellow! Is it not sublime? Can you not feel it taking possession of your every faculty, of your whole physical self? Indolence, voluptuous indolence of body and mind—the latter at the same time lying awake in its chamber, taking in with pleasure and keenest interest everything that passes before its windows. To live, and a realization of the same is enough in these isles of the sun. But merely to live in our own Northern land is to be bound hand and foot to the stake like the Indian's captive, submitting to slow torture.

How would one of these island maidens look upon the suitor that would conduct his courtship

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after the manner of our Northern swain. A book of poems in one hand and a sheet of music in the other, and whose whole set of ideas seem to be made to conform to a code of society ethics, to break which would insure instant dismissal or bring everlasting disgrace upon the would-be violator.

Such is life in our grand republic—give me a land like this, of perpetual sunshine and happy thoughts, each one's life a book unto itself. A land where book-learning is unappreciated by the masses. Where the men and women grow up as flowers about them grow, fed by bright sunshine and balmy air. That is my ideal country.

## CHAPTER III.

### TOM AND I VISIT THE BOILING SULPHUR SPRINGS.

"Dominica's fire-cleft summits  
Rise from bluest of blue oceans;  
Dominica's palms and plantains  
Feel the trade wind's mighty motions,  
Swaying with impetuous stress  
The West Indian wilderness.

. . . . .

"Dominica's crater-caldron  
Seethes against its lava-beaches;

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Boils in misty desolation;  
Seldom foot its border reaches;  
Seldom any traveler's eye  
Penetrates its barriers high.\*

*Lucy Larcom.*

It was a beautiful afternoon that Tom and myself, in company with Mr. Gillion, an officer of the customs, left our inn, mounted on horses, which if not handsome in appearance, were certainly as sure-footed animals as I have ever seen. We were off for the boiling springs, situated some seven miles distant in the mountains.

The streets of Roseau were certainly never constructed as an aid to locomotion, for either man or beast. The roadway, formed of large cobblestones laid closely in opposition with each other, presented a very uneven surface, and on a wet day a decidedly slippery one. In many places the grass had grown to some length between the stones, which did not tend to increase the facilities for travel. The law is, that at certain times of the year the streets shall be thoroughly weeded, and each householder is responsible for that portion of the street in front of his residence or place of business. The principal thoroughfares are generally weeded at these periods, but there is ample time between whiles for the most luxuriant growth, and at times, after frequent rains, some of the by-

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ways present the appearance of a much-neglected garden.

After reaching the outskirts of the town and crossing the bridge, the road was very good, and we could canter along for some distance, gradually ascending the mountain. Proceeding in this way for a mile or two we turned to the right from the main road and took a narrow but well-beaten path. The first obstacle in our way was a river to ford. Dominica is noted for the number of its rivers. How many there really are I never ascertained, but I do know that in traveling through a certain section one is liable to cross the same stream in its circuitous windings anywhere from one to a dozen times. The horses of the island are equally at home in fording the streams, or in climbing up some of the seemingly impassable mountains. The river was not very deep at this point, it being the dry season, and by drawing our feet up until they were almost under us, we went across and were quite dry. After crossing the river the road led us through a large estate of lime trees, among which were mingled here and there the cocoanut palm and other varieties of tropical vegetation. I was particularly struck with the size and beauty of the ferns there, as well as in many other parts of the island. There were myriads of them in the recesses of the mountains, and most of the separ-



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ate trees were fifteen or twenty feet in height. The branches, too, were as finely pennated as any that I have seen in our own country, and their colors fresh and vivid beyond description. This is probably owing to the abundance of the water, which all the year round is running down the mountains, diffusing a coolness of temperature that is very delightful. From this lime plantation the road led us by various windings up the mountain side, and here came in the picturesque beauty of the road.

Think of riding along a precipice, the path in some places not more than three feet wide, a step from which would throw you down into the Roseau Valley, over a thousand feet below. It is seldom that an accident occurs, as these roads are not frequented at night, and the ponies are very careful in picking their way along, always, however, taking the outside edge, much to the consternation of one not used to this way of traveling. The reason for this is that the green sward is always thickest near the brink of the precipice, making a softer path for their feet. The view, as you near the springs, is wild and beautiful; the valley below you, the opposite mountains towering up far above, so far that its summit is hidden from view in the clouds, as is also that of the mountain up which we are traveling, and as you look up it seems that the cliffs

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verily overhang you. Owing to the depth of the valley the distance across, from mountain to mountain, appears much less than it really is. One would judge that a pistol ball could easily span the distance, yet at the foot of the mountain it is some two miles across.

The mountains, being composed of soft limestone, I suggested to Mr. Gillion the possibility of a portion of the cliff becoming detached and perhaps annihilating some unfortunate travelers who, like ourselves, might be on their way to the boiling springs. Detachments have never been known to occur, except after an unusually long spell of rainy weather, when the streams are overflowed. At such periods, although no one was ever known to be injured, huge masses will sometimes become loosened and go thundering down the mountain sides, carrying everything before them into the valley.

An old darkey, whom I employed several times as a guide in pedestrian tours up the mountain, told me about a little experience of his own, which I think will bear repeating. It was during the rainy season, and for two days previous there had been an unusually heavy fall of rain, but the forenoon of that day it had cleared up; so taking his donkey he thought he would make a trip up the mountain to a little hamlet near the summit, where his

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brother and family lived. When some distance up, he came to a cocoanut grove, near which was a nice piece of green sward. Here he thought was a good place for refreshment for himself and his poor beast, so leaving his donkey to graze awhile on the savanna, he betook himself to the cocoanut grove, where knocking down a half-dozen of the green fruit, he proceeded to satisfy his thirst. While thus employed he heard a deafening crash, and the very ground on which he sat shook beneath him. The next instant a dark cloud passed over the savanna with the quickness of lightning, and disappeared in the valley below. On recovering from his fright he repaired to where he had left his donkey. Here, for a space of two hundred yards in width and extending the whole length of the savanna, the ground was torn up and not a shrub or particle of turf left upon it. In response to my inquiry as to what became of the donkey, he said:

“Well, Massa, I done tell de truf, but I never see dat animile from dat day till now. I specs when dat bit of mountain struck him he just melt right away, sah.”

As we proceeded, I perceived the smoke ascending from various soufrieres a little higher up the mountain, and the odor of the sulphurous exhalation became very strong. Soufriere is the com-

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mon name in the West Indies for all active volcanoes, as it is also for those numerous quarries of hot sand and springs of boiling water which are themselves either the remains of ancient craters or the imperfect eruptions from a soil highly impregnated with volcanic elements. A little further and a sudden turn of the path brought us up on a plateau some acres in extent. Near the centre we descended a deep gorge, from the bottom of which steam and vapor were arising from various pools, and from a little stream whose source is further up the mountains. It was a strange sight, this little stream. The water in one place would be in a state of violent ebullition, while it was perfectly cold six feet away. The strong sulphurous odor was almost suffocating, and the steam arising from springs so dense that we could not venture within several feet of them. In places the stream would be so strong of sulphur that we could not drink it, and in others as clear and tasteless as any mountain stream.

Mr. Gillion informed us that the location of the boiling springs was continually changing; that perhaps in a few weeks' time these would cease their bubblings and others a few feet or yards distant would commence, but some of them were always boiling. A rumbling, seemingly way down in the bowels of the earth, was at all times per-

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ceptible, and a vibration of the earth on which we stood could be plainly felt. These springs, if they were only near the town or easier of access, would be worth much for bathing purposes. A bath could be constructed at little expense, into which both hot and cold sulphur water could be conducted.

Much of the country about this section is covered with coffee bushes, and here and there are patches of cocoa. The Dominica planters are cultivating the latter more largely of late years, and find it a very profitable production. We saw land crabs crawling about in great numbers. The draupaudes, enormous frogs, the color of the common toad and about five times as large, are also found in that locality. They certainly are disgusting creatures to look at, but highly esteemed as an article of food by the Dominican, and for my own part I must say that they make a very savory dish.

Our return was somewhat quicker than our journey up the mountain, but not as agreeable, for the descent in many places was very steep, giving one a constant feeling of insecurity in the saddle. On again fording the river I very narrowly escaped a ducking. My horse went a little too far down the stream, with the result of rapidly deepening the water. By means of various acrobatic attempts, I managed to keep myself dry above the

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knees, and prided myself that under the circumstances I had done remarkably well.

There are times during the rainy season when a storm comes on so suddenly and lasts so long that it is impossible to ford the streams. Mr. Gillion told us that once during the previous spring he was caught in this manner between two rivers, and was unable to cross either, having to remain so situated some ten or twelve hours until the swollen waters subsided.

## CHAPTER IV.

### A TWILIGHT PICTURE.

It was one of those beautiful twilights, such as one can only find in the tropics. An evening when all nature was resplendent in her glory, and the very atmosphere itself seemed to partake of the life-giving spirit.

Tom and I had started out for a stroll. We stood for a while upon the old sea wall, gazing out upon the tranquil waters of the Carribean. Not a sail was in sight, and not a sound was to be heard, save the gentle ripple of the quiet sea against the massive wall.

Some writer has said that the twilight hour is the one for better angels. There certainly is

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something in the influence of such an hour that exercises an unobserved but peculiar effect on the feelings.

We stood for awhile in silence, each absorbed in his own thoughts, and drinking in the silent and soul-inspiring picture before us. We followed the sea wall along until we came to the banks of the Roseau River, where its waters gently mingled with those of the mighty ocean. Following the river bank for some distance, we turned into a path that I never remembered having seen before in my rambles. By this time the deepening shadows gave warning that the Prince of Darkness was making his approach. Twilight had deepened. We were about to retrace our steps when my eye caught the twinkling of a light in the valley ahead of us. The green valley wound down from the mountain just beyond, which stood like a frowning tower in broken and strong relief against the sky, and from the mass of shadow below peered out like a star the steady blaze of a lamp.

"Hello, Tom," I said; "I wonder for what purpose a lamp is burning in this deserted spot?"

"I cannot answer that question," said my friend. "We are some distance from Roseau, and I was not aware that there were any houses in this direction. But let us see."

We scrambled along with some difficulty in the

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darkness, now rolling into an unseen hollow, or stumbling over some mound of earth, until finally my companion, who was a little distance ahead of me, stopped, and, as I came up with him, laid his hand on my arm and drew me down to the ground beside him. In a little hollow a few feet below us stood three native huts, enclosed in an area of bright, dewy grass. In the largest of the huts, which faced down the valley directly to our front, hung a small iron lamp, which gave the light we had seen. Beneath the lamp swung a hammock suspended from the wall on either side, and kept in motion by a woman of apparently thirty, whose beauty, but for another more attractive object, would alone have rewarded us for our toil.

The other huts seemed dark and apparently unoccupied, but the door and window shutters of the one in which we were gazing so intently were thrown wide open to give admission to the cool night air, and in and out between the light of the lamp and the full moon, which had now arisen, walked, in bare feet, a young girl of some sixteen years, whose exquisite symmetry and unconscious but divine grace of movement filled my sense of beauty as it never had been filled before. A large shawl, common in the Far East, was attached to her girdle, and in more guarded hours concealed a large part of her person. It hung in loose folds



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from her waist, leaving her bust and smoothly-rounded shoulders entirely bare; the raven-black hair floating over her back showing up in strong relief on her clear, brown skin. A short petticoat of some striped stuff stretched to her knees, while below the limbs were bare. A profusion of rings on her fingers, and what looked in the moonlight like anklets of silver on each daintily turned limb, completed her dress. She was at that divinest moment of female life when it would seem that her womanhood was but just completed.

She was employed in filling a large jar with water from a spring back of the house. She would come out with her empty pitcher, and return with it filled, her two hands pressing closely the sides of the vessel, and treading lightly lest she should disturb the slumbers of the little one in the hammock.

We watched her for some time in silence, hardly daring to stir for fear of being observed. Finally, a silent nod from the woman announced to the lovely water-carrier that her labors might cease.

She stopped for a moment in the full glare of the light, and with a gesture expressive of heat she drew out the shawl from her girdle, untied the short petticoat, and threw them aside. Then, taking from a hook near at hand a loose garment of some light stuff, she leisurely proceeded to don

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it, after which she sat down in the open doorway, dropped her head on her knees, and was as motionless as marble.

"What a picture," I whispered to Tom. "Look at the glare of the moonlight on that glittering jet-black hair veiling about her in such masses."

"And the air of melancholy repose in that attitude," said Tom; "she must be an Asiatic or East India Coolie girl."

Noiselessly we crawled back along the path that we had come, until at such a distance as to render further precaution unnecessary, when we proceeded leisurely to the inn.

We had seen a picture that night in Old Roseau such as the brush of no artist could paint, and no poet find language for expression.

My friend was right in his conjecture, as we afterwards learned; the family was a Coolie one.

Plantation work in Dominica is done largely by Coolies brought over from India by the Government. They bind themselves to stay for a period of ten years. The first five they are to remain in the employ of the man they are hired to. The next five they can work where they choose. They receive a shilling a day, and pay their masters two shillings a week for rations, which leaves them four shillings a week. At one time the Government allowed them to purchase their own rations;

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but this method worked poorly, as they did not properly feed themselves, so anxious were they to save. The consequence was that the hospitals were soon filled with them. Now the proprietor of an estate is compelled to furnish rations approved by the Government. At the expiration of two years the Government obligates itself to return the Coolie to his native land, or, if he prefers remaining on the island, to give him the price of his passage money. It does not seem possible that out of such small wages they would be able to accumulate at all; but it is said that many of them return home with a snug little sum, and some purchase land and remain on the island. There are several that are very well-to-do, and own large tracts of land.

It is no uncommon sight to see a Coolie woman, bare-footed, with a dress on that perhaps cost a dollar, but with jewelry on her person in the shape of rings, anklets or bracelets valued at several hundred dollars. In that way many of them carry their savings, amounting to a small fortune, about with them. And we were told that robbery is almost unknown, for a thief would know full well if he obtained possession of the jewels he could never get away from the island.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE OBEAH PRACTISE.

A Form of Fetichism Which Had Existed for Ages, and Still Exists to Perfection, in the West Indian Islands.

The superstition which existed in ancient times in the power of talismans, amulets and charms of all kinds, it would seem, finds a parallel in our own amongst the negroes of the West Indian Islands, where it exists in perfection under the name of Obeah or Obi, a form of fetichism which most likely originated in Egypt and certain portions of Africa, where tradition states there existed at one time a demon by the name of Ob or Obeah, and from whom Moses commanded the Israelites to abstain from making any inquiries. It would seem, therefore, that this form of fetichism must have been carried to the West Indies by captured negroes in slavery times, and there developed into an oracle and the patron of all kinds of superstitious delusions.

Those who practice fetichism of this kind are called Obeah men or women, for both sexes are supposed to become adept in this mysterious science. Those that attract the most devotion and confidence are such as are old and crafty, and whose hoary heads give them at least an appear-

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ance of antiquity. In the town of Roseau one was pointed out to me who was said to be an Obeah man, and whose age was known to be at least ninety-three. He had a peculiarly harsh and forbidding aspect, and not at all calculated to inspire one with awe, but rather fear. He was bent nearly double, and one eye was concealed from view by means of a huge black patch. This man's name was Drondeleau, and he was much sought after by the natives of Roseau and the adjoining country, and his talismanic powers were supposed to be unsurpassed.

Most of these creatures, I think, have some knowledge of the native plants of a medical and poisonous species and have qualified themselves sufficiently for successful imposition upon the ignorant and credulous. A professor at Hamilton College, Barbadoes, informed me that it was surprising to find how large a number of natives revere and consult these Obeah men, and what implicit faith they repose in them, whether for the cure of disease, the obtaining of revenge for insult and injury, conciliating the favor or love of the opposite sex, or the prediction of future events. The business of these impostors is said to be quite lucrative, and they sell their Obeis adapted to the various cases at different prices, corresponding to the wants of the individuals. The most of their work

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is done during the midnight hour, purposely to conceal and keep from discovery by the white people, and also to add a veil of mystery to their actions. The deluded negroes so thoroughly believe in their supernatural power that they become willing accomplices to this concealment. The most courageous native will tremble at sight of the ragged bundle or the little bunch of bird's claws and feathers that may be hung over the door of the hut to deter marauders. Most of the cases of sudden death that occur in the islands are by the ignorant natives ascribed wholly to the workings of an Obei. Then they will not reveal even a suspicion through a dread of incurring the terrible vengeance of the Obeah man should they betray him. For this reason it is extremely difficult to detect one of these miscreants from any other negro.

When a native has been robbed of any article, he immediately applies to the Obeah man of the neighborhood, and the fact is made known that an Obei is set for the thief, who becomes so terrified that, as an only resource, he applies to the superior skill of some more prominent Obeah man to counteract the workings or spell of the first. If he does not succeed in finding such a one, or his imagination leads him to feel himself still afflicted, the chances are that he soon falls into a condition

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of complete melancholy, sleep and appetite leave him, his strength rapidly fails, and he is a complete wreck, both bodily and mentally, gradually sinking into the grave.

The Obei is usually composed of a great variety of materials, such as blood, feathers, bird's claws, pieces of bone, hair, teeth of different animals, etc. Dr. Barnham, who practised medicine in Dominica in the last century, spoke of numerous cases of poisoning by Obeah men that came to the notice of the colonists at that time. In such a secret and insidious manner was the poisoning done, that detection was rendered almost impossible. The murderers were occasionally brought to justice, but it is reasonable to believe that by far the greater number escaped. A singular case occurred in Trinidad a few months ago, which will serve to illustrate to what extent this awful practise is sometimes carried. A man by the name of La Fave, with his family, lived near another negro called Umbredo. The latter had for some years made his living as an Obeah man, and so great was the terror inspired by him that the natives obeyed him implicitly. La Fave alone declined to believe in Umbredo, saying that he could do no more than any other man, and called him a fraud and impostor. This so enraged Umbredo that he declared that all the food the La Fave family ate would henceforth act as

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poison, and that before the month was out not a member of the family would be living. Two days later the La Fave family, consisting of the father, mother and eight children, grew suddenly ill after dinner. By two o'clock one of the children was dead. By six a second victim was added to the list, and at nine o'clock a third. Instead of going to the authorities in regard to the matter, the La Fave family were now firmly convinced that Umbredo was really possessed of supernatural power and could visit his wrath upon those who offended him; so they determined to keep the whole matter secret, fearing that further vengeance might be wrought upon them. Before the funeral of the three children took place a fourth died, while the six other members of the family were dangerously ill; that forenoon the mother died, and during the evening still another child. The father, who had eaten less heartily than the rest of the family, recovered sufficiently to be about; but his mind was gone, and he would not touch a mouthful of food for fear of being poisoned. Two days later he died in convulsions. In less than a week's time the remaining members of the family were dead, and the Obeah man's prophecy was fulfilled. As soon as the white residents learned the facts, Umbredo was hidden or spirited away by the colored people, and, at last accounts, had never been found.



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The following is a narrative respecting Obei in Jamaica during the days of slavery, many years ago:

Upon returning to Jamaica, after a short residence in England, a planter found that a great many of his negroes had died during his absence, and that of such as remained alive at least one-half were debilitated, bloated and in a deplorable condition. The mortality continued upon his return, and frequently two or three were buried in one day, while others were taken ill and began to decline under the same symptoms. All was done by medicine and the most careful nursing that could be done to preserve the lives of the feeblest; but, in spite of all his endeavors, this depopulation went on for a twelve-month longer, with more or less intermission, and without his being able to ascertain the real cause, though the Obeah practise was strongly suspected as well by himself as by the doctor and other white persons on the plantation. Still, he was unable to verify his suspicions, because the patients constantly denied having anything to do with persons of that order, or any knowledge of them. At length, a negress, who had been ill for some time, came one day and informed him that, feeling it was impossible for her to live much longer, she felt herself bound in duty before she died to impart a very great secret and acquaint

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him with the true cause of the disorder, hoping that the disclosure might prove the means of stopping the mischief which had already swept away such a number of her fellow-slaves. She proceeded to say that her stepmother, a woman more than eighty years of age, but still hale and active, had put Obei upon her, as she had also done upon those that had lately died, and that the old woman had practised Obei for as many years as she could remember. The other negroes of the plantation no sooner heard of this impeachment than they ran in a body to their master and confirmed the truth of it, adding that she had carried on this business ever since her arrival from Africa, and was the terror of the whole neighborhood. Upon this he repaired directly with six white servants to the old woman's home, and forcing the door open, observed the whole inside of the roof, which was of thatch, and every crevice of the walls stuck with the implements of her trade, consisting of rags, feathers, bones of cats, and a thousand and other articles. Examining further, a large earthen pot or jar, closely covered, was concealed under the bed. It contained a prodigious quantity of round bulk of earth or clay of various dimensions, whitened on the outside, and variously compounded—some with hair and rags, or feathers of all sorts, and strongly bound with twine; others

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blended with the upper section of the skulls of cats, or stuck around with cat's teeth and claws, or with human or dog's teeth and glass beads of different colors. There were also a great many egg shells filled with a viscous or gummy substance, the properties of which he neglected to examine, and many little bags stuffed with a variety of articles, the particulars of which cannot now be recollected. The house was immediately pulled down, and the whole of its contents committed to the flames, amid the general acclamation of all the negroes. In regard to the old woman, he declined bringing her to trial under the law of the island, which would have punished her with death, but from a principle of humanity delivered her into the hands of a party of Spaniards, who, as she was capable of doing some trifling kinds of work, were willing to carry her with them to Cuba. From the moment of her departure all his negroes seemed to be animated with new life, and the maldy spread no further among them. The total loss of life, in the course of about fifteen years previous to the discovery of the Obeah practise, and imputable solely to that, he estimated as at least one hundred negroes.

## CHAPTER VI.

### WE VISIT THE GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL, AND SEE SOME CASES OF LEPROSY.

One morning early we visited the Government Hospital, situated on the top of a mountain back of the town. It is a large, commodious building, with every facility for taking care of the island poor. It was a long walk all the way up hill, so it necessarily required a great deal of sweating and puffing before we arrived there. It was well worth the effort, though, for the magnificent view afforded, if for nothing more. We were met at the gate by a young colored man, assistant to the physician in charge, who kindly offered to show us through the wards.

There were a great many patients in the building at the time, most of them being the poorest class of the natives and plantation Coolies. The prevailing disease was fever of a malarial type, brought on by hardship and exposure. We saw a few cases of consumption, but that is a rare disease, and among the better classes almost unknown.

There was one ward which particularly interested us, that containing the lepers. There were only a few patients suffering from the loathsome

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disease, but they were well-marked cases. One poor fellow had lost all the toes from both feet, his fingers were drawn out of shape, some of the joints, like the toes, having dropped off, and his face was beginning to show signs of the affliction, a large ulcer having appeared upon his nose. This disease is quite prevalent in the West Indian Islands, and is no doubt identical with the ancient leprosy, or *Elephantiasis graecorum*, of Bible times. In spite of all the means that art and human foresight can suggest in regard to cleanliness of person and property, the use of manifold methods of treatment for the cure of the disease, and the preservation of health, this singular ailment has kept its foothold. Neither medical knowledge nor the power of drugs seem to have any effect; whether because the disease is of its own nature mortal, or that its cause and treatment are not properly understood, I will not venture an assertion.

This peculiar disease may be divided into three stages: In the first the skin assumes an unnatural whiteness, a morbid or death-like appearance. In the second stage this changes to a yellowish color, which, in turn, changes in the third stage to a deep violet, or even in some cases to a greenish hue. Of course, these changes of color are not so apparent in the black race. As an accompaniment to the first stage, the patient experiences more or

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less fever with chills, the joints become stiff and very weak, there is a feeling of heaviness about the chest, and the blood rushes to the head, giving the eyes a peculiar, blood-shot appearance, which, contrasted to the whiteness of the skin, gives the victim such an unearthly appearance that, once being seen, it is never forgotten. The general condition of malaise, which constitutes the first stage, may be of greater or less severity, and may continue for months, or even years—or the disease may pursue a very rapid course. Oftentimes the first hint a patient receives of his condition is from his companions, who notice a peculiar color of the skin, as above described.

One of the most marked features of this frightful malady is the condition of anasthesia, or insensibility to pain, the sufferer not feeling the prick of a pin or cut of a knife. This condition is not always found, particularly in the early stages, as the patient is then sometimes possessed with acute sensibility and suffers at the least touch; but in the latter stages it is very marked, and instances are related of lepers having fallen into the fire without knowing it, and were only rescued by some one whose attention was attracted by the odor of charred flesh. After a time the whole appearance of the skin becomes altered, giving place to dark, greenish spots, resembling the *eccymosis*

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or black and blue spot of a bruise, with which every one is familiar. These spots vary in size, and are at first separated from each other; but gradually they extend until they touch and cover the entire body, forming a mantle of rottenness. The limbs then begin to swell, followed by a bloating of the body, until after a time the skin, distended to its utmost limits, bursts, and ulcers of the foulest kind are formed. The extremities of the hands and feet begin to wither, the flesh shrinks away from the bones, and, in many cases, fingers and toes drop from their articulations, as was the case with one of the patients we saw. The face is usually much bloated and disfigured, being covered with hard red tubercles, varying in size from a pea to a hen's egg. The eyes seem almost bursting from their sockets, and are often the seat of sores, resulting in total blindness. This is the last stage, and the skin now presents a dark reddish hue, the internal organs are seen to be the seat of tubercles, and sooner or later the lungs become so filled up that breathing is obstructed, and the patient is in momentary danger of suffocation. The death struggle is said to be something terrible to behold, the sufferer writhing and twisting in agony, and tearing the clothing from the throat and body in vain efforts for breath, until at last he falls back completely exhausted and uncon-

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scious, and death comes to his release. This disease is neither epidemic nor contagious in these islands, but seems to confine itself almost entirely to the descendents of those first afflicted.

### CHAPTER VII.

#### THE STORY OF OLD BUTTMAN'S JULE.—A DOMINICA TRAGEDY.

"Do you see that Creole just passing?" said Captain James, the Inspector of Police, as we sat one day in the pretty little garden back of the old fort on the hill.

"Yes!" I replied; "she is a beauty, too."

"A few years ago," continued the Inspector, lighting his cigar, she was considered the handsomest woman in Roseau, which you will allow is saying a good deal, for the old town contains some as handsome dark-skinned beauties as it has ever been my fortune to meet. But there is a strange story connected with her life, which you, as a visitor to the island, might be interested in, and which shows to what extent this class of the mixed type are governed by the passions of love and hate."

"I would be delighted to hear it," I replied, knowing Captain James' reputation as a storyteller.



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“Her right name is Jule Rivera. Five years ago she lived with her old father at Prince Rupert’s Bay, a small town on the north side of the island. The place itself is of little import, being principally a port where American whalers and other vessels put in for water, fruit and fresh provisions. Her father had resided there for years, and eked out an existence for himself and family by supplying the vessels, and also trading a little native rum and other articles when opportunity offered.

“When Jule was about seventeen years of age, the mate of a New Bedford whaling vessel, that was cruising in these waters, became enamoured with the girl, and, finally, gave up his job, settled down on shore and married her. He had some little means of his own, for he had an outfit come from the States, fitted up a whaling station with a fine large boat, and all the appurtenances necessary to pursue that vocation from the shore. He was fairly successful in his venture, and for a time all went well. He was three times the age of Jule, and people wondered when she married him; but for all that, they seemed to be a devoted couple, and she made him a good wife.

“Not long after his marriage, old Buttman, that was her husband’s name, sent for his nephew, a young fellow of about twenty, to come out and help him in his business, as few here understood

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that kind of work. Well, he came out, and made his home with them. He was a handsome, energetic boy, whom everybody liked. It was a rather risky experiment, that, bringing a chap like him to live under the same roof with a young woman of Jule's temperament and disposition, particularly when her husband was as old as her father. The result can be imagined. They grew to like each other, and when a young woman of her kind likes, it is something more than platonic. She loves, and that, too, with her whole heart and soul. There is no half-way business about it, and so it proved in this case. The young man, whose name was Jim Rand, despite his affection for her, had enough respect for his uncle to control his feelings and not commit any act that would bring disgrace upon the old man or break up his family relations.

"Jule took in the situation fully, but with her passionate disposition love knew no bounds. To hope was to have. No obstacle could present itself in her path but that might be surmounted, if not by fair means, by foul.

"Well, one morning old Buttman was found dead in bed. There was not so much as a scratch upon him anywhere, and death was pronounced due to heart disease, or some other natural cause. The week following Jule came over to Roseau, and took up her abode, for a time, with her fa-

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ther's sister. A few months later she returned to Prince Rupert's, when she and young Jim were married.

"It is said that the course of true love never runs smooth, and it seems that the case of the fair Jule was to be no exception.

"Pierre Rivera had another daughter besides Jule, named Lila, something over a year younger. She, likewise, set her eyes in a loving way upon Jim, and her heart went out to him. Jim liked her well enough for a companion to while away an idle hour, but when it came to a question of love his heart failed to respond in that ardent and affectionate manner that one of Lila's temperament would demand. Still, he was attentive to her. She knew he could not marry her sister, for she already had a husband, and she hoped in time he would prove susceptible to her charms.

"After Buttman's death there was a change in her demeanor towards her sister. Previous to that she knew that Jule was no impediment in the way of her marrying Jim, and she loved her; but now things were so different, that love was turned to bitter hatred.

Things went along quietly, though, until her sister and Jim were married. From that moment she seemed like a caged tigress. For some reason, her sister seemed to hate her with an equal in-

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tensity. One day there was a disturbance in the Rand household. High words were heard, and shortly afterwards young Jim was seen to leave the house, take his boat, and row off to one of the whalemens lying at anchor in the cove. The vessel sailed that night, and from that time Jim Rand was never again seen on the island of Dominica. After his departure terrible screams were heard in the house. The neighbors rushed in. There in the middle of the room stood the two sisters, each armed with a knife. Their eyes depicted the hatred of their hearts. They grasped each other by their long hair, which had become disengaged from its fastenings, and hung in rich profusion around their faces and shoulders, and showered blow after blow upon each other with their knives. Shriek after shriek rent the air. Jule accused Lila of trying to steal her husband's affections. Lila called her sister a murderess, and said she killed old Buttman, her former husband.

“Finally, they were separated, but Lila had been wounded unto the death, and her sister nearly so. The port doctor was called, but his services were of no avail, so far as Lila was concerned, for she died two hours later from the terrible knife cut in her throat. Before she passed away, however, she told her story, and what led up to the cause of the last tragedy. It seemed the night that

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Buttman died she had been out for a stroll with Jim. It was quite late when he left her at her father's door, which was but a few steps from her sister's house. Being somewhat jealous of her sister, she waited until Jim had reached home and entered the house, when she stole softly across that she might look into the window and satisfy her curiosity as to what might transpire. The shutters were wide open, to let in the cool night air, and there was nothing to obstruct her view.

Jim, for some reason, went directly to his room, which was in another part of the house. Jule, who had evidently been awaiting his return, was enraged at his apparent indifference. Her sister had but to get one glance of her face, almost livid with rage, to see this. Something must happen. She knew Jule too well to know that the turmoil within her breast would subside without some outburst. It came in a manner that she least expected. She saw her wring her hands in apparent agony of mind. Then she shook her clinched fist at the sleeping form of her husband in the adjoining room. She stopped for a moment, as though in thought. Her eyes flashed, and her lips parted in a smile. She went to the little work-table opposite and opened a drawer. Lila watched her, almost breathless in her excitement. She took out a long, heavy steel pin with a small brass head

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of some fancy design. It had been given her years before by some whaleman admirer. It could be used for a variety of purposes. It was intended for an ornamental hat-pin in the country where it came from; but it could be used now as a weapon, and a formidable one it would be, too, in the hands of a dangerous woman. She grasped it firmly in her hand, and stole softly towards the sleeping figure. Buttman's shirt was open, exposing his throat and chest. She pressed it against his left breast and bore upon it with her full weight. Lila saw it sink in its full length. He gave a sudden start, as though trying to raise himself in bed, then, without a moan, sank back upon his pillow, dead. Jule removed the pin, carefully wiped it upon her skirt, and replaced it in the drawer. After this she threw herself down in a chair, where she remained until morning.

"Lila kept her secret, and bided her time. She saw through it all. The passion of her sister's love for Jim was beyond control. She would lose Jim now, she knew that; but so should her sister. You do not know the power of love and hate in these people. Revenge is sweet. She would wait. They would be married. She would afterward appear upon the scene. She secretly gloated in her heart upon the trouble her denouncement would make. She cared nothing about the case from its legal as-

## In Old Roseau.

pect. The matter of her personal spite, and humiliating her sister in her husband's affections, and causing a separation, was all that she could desire or hope for; was not that revenge of the sweetest kind?

"Well, to make a long story short, she waited until three weeks after the marriage. It was difficult to do so. Love may be kept within bounds, but it is hard to control the passion of hatred, when once it arises with all its power within us.

"Her sister and Jim seemed particularly happy on the day in question. He, poor fellow, was innocent enough; but why should she spare him? She walked quietly into the house and denounced her sister as a murderess before her husband. Jule turned pale, and tried to deny the whole; but Lila continued, and told her story to the end, and wound up by going to the table drawer, and taking from it the brass-headed pin and holding it up to the bewildered gaze of Jule's husband, she said:

"'Jim, this is what she did it with.'

"In vain Jule denied her guilt. She plead and raved. Jim saw through it all. With a curse on his lips he left the house, never to return. Then came the terrible struggle between the sisters, with the result as described.

"After Lila's death, Jule was arrested and committed to prison. The trial was an exciting one.

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There were no witnesses to appear against her. She swore it was all jealousy on the part of her sister that caused her to tell the story she did concerning the death of her former husband, to prejudice Jim against her, and there was no truth in it. So far as Lila's death was concerned, she only defended herself, and was cut up nearly as badly as was her sister.

"Jule was a beautiful woman. The jury sympathized with her, as is usually the case, and, after a long trial, she was acquitted.

"To-day she is living quietly with her aunt, here in Roseau. A proud-spirited, beautiful woman, but on her brow is a mark that can never be effaced—the mark of Cain."



## PART II.

AMONG THE CARIBS.

A Continuation of My Experiences in  
Dominica,

and

Reminiscences of a Sojourn Among the  
Remnants of a Once Powerful People.

“To-morrow I sail for those cinnamon groves  
Where nightly the ghost of the Caribee roves.”



## CHAPTER I.

### AMONG THE CARIBS.

Reminiscences and a Determination to See the Mahoe Country and its Carib Inhabitants.

I had spent several weeks in that old and truly delightful town of Roseau, musing among those interesting remains that are the witnesses of its former prosperity and the proofs of its present decay, and when I had sipped my coffee this last morning, and had looked for awhile from the window of my apartments into the little courtyard below, where nothing was to be seen but two or three idle black fellows, sitting with their backs to the wall, apparently too lazy to even shift their position and get into the shade, I felt somewhat at a loss what to do with myself. One-half hour I spent in chatting with a dark-eyed Creole maid, who was doing service at the inn; this being by no means a new diversion, I soon tired of it, and, finally, taking my hat, I walked into the street and strolled for at least the twentieth time through the pretty little park, and wondered for the twentieth time how it was possible to keep that public garden in such a neat condition and such a myriad of flowers in constant bloom with so little labor. I next found myself standing in the old Cathedral,

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where ever and anon a dusky face would pass me and, crossing herself, kneel at the altar and repeat the prayer that constant service had so indelibly impressed upon the mind as to render its saying almost mechanical. I came out of the Cathedral and strolled down the street. I stopped for a moment to watch a group of women bearing baskets of fruit upon their heads to the Roseau market, and I wondered again at the mathematical exactness required to so evenly balance a heavy weight upon the head with no help whatever from the hands. With body erect, arms hanging gracefully by the side, the half-uncovered bosom, fully developed by this manner of life, rising and falling as they tripped lightly along. The picture was one for an artist. I continued my walk, and turned so as to take me away from the streets of the town and down to an old bridge over the Roseau River. Loitering upon a bridge, one generally leans for awhile over the parapet on one side, and then crosses to the opposite parapet, next bending for awhile over it; and so I did on this bridge at Roseau. I watched a long time a half score of Dominican damsels washing clothes in the river, every one conspicuous by her bright-colored petticoat, very short, coming some three inches above the knees, showing in most of them an exquisite contour of dusky limbs below, while the outer skirt,

## In Old Roseau.

which covers all when on the street, was thrown over the head, as a shelter from the sun. I was much amused, while watching them, at the precocious gallantry of two very young English boys from the town, who endeavored to attract the attention of these water nymphs by throwing pebbles into the stream, and who were sometimes rewarded by the upward glance of several pairs of dark eyes; and having seen all that was to be seen from one parapet, I crossed to the other, from which nothing was to be seen at all, excepting the river in its deep, rocky bed, and, beyond it, the high, broad range of the Dominican Mountains, a scene not without its charm, however, to the lover of the wild, the desolate and the picturesque.

When one looks upon a lofty mountain range, fancy generally travels beyond it, and the eye wanders in imagination over those countries from which it separates us.

“Those are the Dominican Mountains,” I said to myself, “and what lies beyond? Is it not the Mahoe country, inhabited by the remnant of that once powerful tribe, the Carib Indians, so memorable in the early Columbian history?” What a host of vivid and delightful recollections instantly started into being! In a few moments I had lived over again the many happy hours of childhood spent in the perusal of that imperishable monu-

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ment of the genius of Irving, "The Voyages of Columbus," and when I again looked towards the mountains that separated me from the land of Mahoe, I saw the tall, spare figure of the courteous voyager, standing erect, his grave countenance expressing a consciousness of his high destiny, and around him clustered in a group, with a look of wonderment and timidity depicted on their faces, were the Caribs, as he saw them on his second voyage of discovery.

At the present time but two islands in the Carribean Sea, Gaudaloupe and Dominica, contain a remnant of these once powerful people. A people with a most wonderful history; an unwritten and forgotten history, running back unnumbered ages, farther than we can trace it, but first beginning to be known to man when the existence of the new continent dawned upon his awakened senses.

"Columbus found the Caribs a powerful and warlike people, entirely different from the peaceful, mild-mannered natives that he first encountered. They were trained to war from their infancy; their distant roamings by sea made them observant and intelligent. They went, on predatory enterprises, in canoes made from the hollowed trunks of trees, to the distance of *one hundred and fifty leagues*. Their arms were bows and arrows, pointed with the bones of fishes, or shells of tor-

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toise, and poisoned with the juice of a certain herb. They made descents upon the various islands, ravaged the villages, carried off the youngest and handsomest of the women, and made prisoners of the men, to be killed and eaten. When the men went forth on these expeditions, the women remained to defend their shores from invasion. The natives of the other islands only knew how to divide time by day and night by the sun and moon; whereas, these had acquired some knowledge of the stars, by which to calculate the times and seasons."

Little thought I in those early days that I would ever have it in my power to visit this far-off sunny isle of the Carribean, but now that wish had been gratified, I had seen all that was quaint or curious in old Roseau and the eastern part of Dominica. I had no wish to return to the States. It was yet too early to escape the cold winter there, and why not, therefore, change my dream to a reality? "I'll cross the mountains to-morrow, or as soon as it is possible to make the arrangements," I said to myself, and two days later at the most I will be in the Mahoe country among the Caribs; and so strong a hold had this idea taken of my mind, that neither the picturesque outline of the old town itself, nor the half-robed charms of the Dominican damsels, had any attraction for me now.

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I fixed my eyes once more on the distant mountain range, and, turning hastily away, made all speed back to the inn that I might make my arrangements for the prospective journey, such as providing myself with a sure-footed beast and a suitable guide; the latter, if possible, to be a native Carib, several of which I had seen that day in the marketplace with their baskets for sale.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE START.—JEAN BAPTISTE PIERRE.—I REACH THE MAHOE COUNTRY.

A more beautiful morning never dawned upon the mountain tops than that which broke upon the Dominican Mountains two days later, when, as the early convent bells were chiming, we crossed the bridge where it seemed but yesterday I was an idle dreamer, and following the well-beaten foot-path that leads from the old town, we turned our horses' heads towards that El Dorado of which we were in search.

The sun had arisen in a cloudless sky, and looking back from the winding mountain path upon the town, seemed like a city floating in the air, for a sea of light vapor hung over the Roseau River, and like a veil shut out all but the taller buildings



## In Old Roseau.

and the towers of the Cathedral, which lifted themselves above the mists, bathed in the golden light of morning. I had never started out on a journey with half the buoyancy I felt that morning. Everything had been favorable for me. I had secured two ponies, which would transport us at least a part, if not the whole, of our journey, and the guide, Jean Baptiste Pierre, a mixture of the blood of some wandering Frenchman with that of the native Carib, was a most valuable acquisition, for his linguistic attainments alone, if for nothing more. He spoke a patois, or dialect of his own, derived from the French, Carib and English, and a more abominable mix-up of language it would be impossible to find.

While ascending the mountain I had leisure, for the first time, to think of making acquaintance with my guide, and was ready with the offer of an American cigar, which, by the way, is much better than the native article, to secure his good-will. He was a young man of about twenty-four, and it was evident from his dress that he considered himself something a little above the ordinary Carib. It consisted of cotton pants, calico shirt, broad straw hat, braided from some native grass; shoes upon the feet, and, what was most conspicuous, a red sash of some cotton stuff, taking the place of a belt around his waist.

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Taking the proffered cigar, he thanked me, and, in answer to my question as to his antecedent history, and how his father, a Frenchman, came to stray to this far-off Carib settlement, he replied:

“My father, monsieur, he was ze French sailor, and as there was reason for most things, there was also reason why he should leave his native land. My father,” he explained, “he was in what you call ze café. An English sailor he come in, zay drink ze wine too much. Presently zay quarrel about ze cards zay play. My father he give him his knife.”

“How,” said I, “did giving him his knife help out the quarrel?”

“You no understand, monsieur; he stick ze knife in his ribs.”

“Murdered him, then?” I said.

“As you plaise to call him, monsieur.”

“How did your worthy father escape the laws of his country, Jean Baptiste,” I asked; “surely one man cannot kill another in France, and not be made to suffer therefor?”

“Oh, zar was ze prosession, of what you call ze political, going by at ze time, and ze people was too much busy watching them to notice ze little accident right away; and my father stepped out unperceived, and concealed himself for two days, when he stow himself away on English vessel for

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ze West Indies. When ze vessel out at sea he come on deck. He good sailor man, and ze captain he no hear of ze murder, as you call him. He work his way to Barbadoes, then he leave ze vessel. He come here on small fishing boat. He work in Roseau some time. He see my mother one day in market-place, where she go to sell ze basket. She nice-looking gal then. He come out to Mahoe country same as we go to-day. She like him. He like her. He live here till two year ago when he die.”

By the time Jean Baptiste Pierre had finished his story, which was quite amusing to me, and afforded a fair insight into his easy-going character, we had reached the highest part of the first range, and begun to descend into a valley in the heart of the mountains.

The mountains of Dominica, I think, are wilder than those of any of the other West Indian islands, and the path we were pursuing, since leaving the main road, was very little traveled; the Caribs, in their occasional visits to Roseau to dispose of their handiwork, in the shape of the wonderful baskets, made of grass, and so closely woven as to be water-tight, being almost the only ones that used the path, and they generally went on foot.

For two hours in the middle of the day the heat was excessive, and we rested in the shade beside

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a mountain stream. There we partook of the food we had brought with us, washed down by a glass of cool, sparkling water. The glare of broad day had withdrawn from the valleys, and a sombre light had descended on the mountain tops when we reached the little hamlet of Laudet. It comprised but three houses, two of which were occupied by native families, the third being vacant. An aged man and woman came out of the nearest house at our approach and made us welcome. Hospitality is born in these people, and to be discourteous to a stranger is an unpardonable sin. A hammock was hung for me in the vacant house, and Jean Baptiste Pierre made up for himself a bed of grass upon the floor. Before retiring, however, the old couple set for us a supper of boiled eggs, cassava cakes and coffee, and never meal tasted sweeter than did that simple repast in the heart of the Dominican Mountains. In the other house lived the son of the old couple and his family. Here in the native wildness, miles away from anywhere, these few people lived in complete obscurity and perfect happiness.

A little garden patch, some goats, a few beans, yams, bananas, and other tropical fruits for the picking, their every want was supplied. I realized that there was more truth than poetry in the old adage: "Blessed be nothing."

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I will not detail my journey from Laudet, next morning. After partaking of coffee and cakes we were off before sunrise. Leaving the path that we had been following, we struck off to the right, and towards noon we reached the further side of the mountain, and descended to the plain beyond. Here, stopping on a small elevation above the stream that crossed our path, my guide pointed to the beautiful country that lay spread out before us, and said: "Monsieur, that is the Mahoe land."

### CHAPTER III.

MY ADVENT INTO THE CARIB SETTLEMENT.—I BECAME ACQUAINTED WITH THE FAMILY OF JEAN BAPTISTE PIERRE.—ATTEND DIVINE WORSHIP AND MEET WITH A SURPRISE.

It was noon that day when we entered the Carib reservation and found ourselves at last in the El Dorado I had so fondly pictured in my imagination.

This reservation, set apart by the Government, extends from the Mahoe River to the Crayfish River, a distance of about four miles along the Atlantic coast; and from thence back into the

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mountains as far as they pleased to cultivate. There were some forty dwellings, each with a little garden adjacent to the same. Back in the mountains were other gardens, where grew the various island fruits, as bananas, cocoanuts and limes, of which there were great abundance.

The houses were low and thatched with grass, tied into bundles and lashed firmly upon frameworks of poles, with wooden doors and shutters.

As we rode along, from every doorway and window gazed a group of curious faces, for the advent of a stranger in their midst was of rare occurrence, and enough to excite in their minds a feeling of wonderment. Without a word, Jean Baptiste Pierre rode majestically along, as though fully alive to the importance of his mission. He finally stopped before a neat little house near the centre of the settlement. Here we dismounted, and, beckoning me to follow, he entered the dwelling.

I was first introduced to his mother, a yellow-skinned old lady of fifty, who hobbled about with a cane. Her fat face beamed all over with good-nature, and I saw at once that *ze gentleman of America*, as he pleased to style me, would be a welcome guest. His two sisters, Louise and Marcella, aged, respectively, fifteen and seventeen, were light-hearted, sunny maidens, in whose veins, like his own, flowed the blood of two races. The blood

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of the Carib showed in the wavy hair, full lips, and rich olive complexion, while that of the jovial French sailor, who had strayed to these wilds so many years ago, gave the delicate contour and suppleness of limb, the sparkling, merry black eyes and the small hands and feet; clothed at the time in a simple garment, gathered about the hips and reaching below the knees, they were models that would have delighted the eyes of an artist.

“Bon jour, monsieur,” exclaimed the elder of the two, as she came forward and extended her hand, “we with *plaisure* welcome ze gentleman.” A flush stole over the olive cheeks, and the rich red lips parted in a smile, showing a set of pearly teeth that would have created envy in the heart of a society belle.

The house of Jean Baptiste Pierre was more pretentious than most of those in the little settlement, which consisted of but two rooms. This, however, could boast of four, and one of these, with a window looking out upon a pretty little garden of flowers, in which I fancied I could detect the handiwork of Louise and Marcella, was placed at my disposal. My portmanteau was brought in, which I unpacked, and I soon had the satisfaction of feeling that I was at home during my stay in the Carib settlement.

During my visit of several weeks I realized more

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than once how fortunate I was in having secured the services of Jean Baptiste. He hunted with me, found some one to do any work that I required, smoked my cigars, drank my rum, and slept. He would do anything for me but work. He was as good and trusty a servant as I had ever found. Anything that I wanted he would get, or, if he thought it too much trouble, induce one of his pretty sisters to get it for me, and they, winsome creatures, were always willing to wait upon me, and I fancy rather inclined to shirk their household duties, whatever they might be, for the privilege of doing so.

The majority of the Carib people are very poorly clothed, shoes and stockings are possessed by but few, and then worn only on special occasions. The ordinary dress of the male consists of a pair of cotton pants and a shirt. That of the women, of a loose calico wrapper, girded at the waist; their hair, done up in a bright-colored kerchief or hanging down their backs in luxurious tresses.

The complexion of the Caribs is a light olive tint. The features are much more regular and delicate than those of the native type, though, often by intermarriage, there is a mixture of the two races; but when this occurs that of the Indian predominates, and the thick lips and the kinky hair of the African are wanting.



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Among the sexes work is quite equally divided. The women do all the work in the house; but out-of-doors they work together, the women doing fully as much labor as the men. A feeling of perfect harmony seems to exist, and no dissatisfaction arises as to the division of labor, as might be the case in a less favored clime. The women are treated with love and respect, and during my stay in their midst I never heard of a case of wife-beating or cruelty, as has often been attributed to them.

On a little eminence back of the village stands a square building, built after the same pattern as the native houses, although somewhat larger. On the top of the building is a cross, indicating that it is a church, and the religion of the people Roman Catholic. Once a month a priest comes from over the mountain and holds services. There is not a hamlet of any size throughout the island where representatives of this church do not go at least several times during the course of a year.

The Sunday following my arrival was fortunately the one set apart for the visitation of the parish priest. The inhabitants of Mahoe, attired in all the finery at their command, attend worship on these occasions. Louise and Marcella, arrayed in bright-colored calico wrappers, white stockings and with shoes upon their feet, presented themselves to me early that morning.

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“Would monsieur like to attend ze church?”

“Most assuredly,” I replied, and donning my best duck suit, I prepared to accompany them.

The building, being a small one, would hold but a part of the church-going inhabitants, so that during the day there were three services, that none might be deprived of the important privilege. Jean Baptiste Pierre, for reasons best known to himself, preferred to wait until later in the day, and, together with his pretty sisters, I wended my way to the little chapel on the hilltop.

Father Gangres, a fat, little Frenchman, went through the services much after the manner of one who felt that he had an unpleasant duty to perform. A duty that should be done as expeditiously as possible, and be consistent with the solemnities of the occasion.

There was no music of any kind, and, although the congregation was an attentive and devout one, the services lacked that solemnity which is usually so characteristic of the Catholic church.

After mass was over we started on our return, taking, at the suggestion of Louise, a circuitous route through the woods to avoid the heat of the sun. We had gone but a short distance when one of those sudden showers, coming without a moment's warning from an apparently cloudless sky, burst upon us. We sought refuge under an over-

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hanging rock that jutted several feet from the mountain side, and afforded us almost complete protection. In a brief hour the storm was past, and the sun shone as brightly as ever. But an unforeseen obstacle presented itself. The little mountain stream that separated us from the village was swollen to thrice its former proportions. Where before we could have stepped from stone to stone and passed in safety dry shod, it was now a decidedly damp undertaking, and would necessitate wading nearly to the waist in troubled waters.

Louise and Marcella were dressed in their Sunday-best. They looked at each other for a moment, and then at me, as though in hesitation about something; then Louise said:

“Monsieur will plaise excuse for ze moment,” and the two dodged behind a rock.

In a short time they appeared with their shoes and stockings in their hands and, holding up their skirts, they entered the stream. It was deeper than they anticipated, and they retreated to the shore. Begging once more to be excused, they again sought refuge behind the rock. I fancied I heard the rustle of female apparel. I was beginning to be interested in the proceedings. “Good heavens, thought I, what will those girls do next?” I had not long to wait, for they appeared a few moments later clad in their single undergarment,

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with their clothes tied up in a bundle under their arm. I fairly held my breath.

"Louise! Marcella!" I exclaimed.

"Yes, monsieur."

"Don't do that again."

"What monsieur?"

"Take off any more clothes."

"Why zat is impossible, monsieur," and, laughing merrily, they forded the stream.

Taking off my shoes and stockings, I followed them, wetting my white duck trousers to the waist. Standing in the sun for a few moments, my pretty guides allowed themselves to dry, after which, donning their apparel, we proceeded homeward, arriving without further misadventure.

## CHAPTER IV.

### KING GEORGE.—MY INTRODUCTION.— JEAN BAPTISTE PIERRE AND I HUNT THE WILD HOG.

At the time of my sojourn in the land of Mahoe, King George was the recognized head or ruler of the Carib nation. His father and grandfather before him had filled the same honorable position, and since the death of the latter, some twenty years before, he had administered the affairs of state in

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an apparently satisfactory manner to all concerned. He was a very old man, and the infirmities of age, together with the free use of the native rum, had converted the aged ruler into little more than an automaton. He seldom ventured outside of his own dooryard, and the greater part of his time was spent in reclining on a wooden settee that had been arranged for his convenience in the shade of a large tamarind tree. His Majesty spoke no English, and very little French, so that conversation was somewhat difficult, even with an interpreter. I went through the formality of an introduction by Jean Baptiste Pierre, who informed me that almost the first question he asked was, if I knew of anything that would cure him of the gout, as he had become very infirm of late. The old man had the opinion that all English-speaking people had to a greater or lesser extent some knowledge of the science of medicine.

I realized that nothing could help him, for what he designated as gout was a dropsical affection, causing his feet and limbs to swell to an enormous size. To please him, however, I promised to send him a bottle of medicine when I returned to Roseau.

I never saw King George again, except in passing the house at a distance. In the administration of affairs, the word of the old Carib was absolute,

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from whose decision there was no appeal. The culprit, male or female, that was brought before him never thought of rebelling at the punishment accorded. This was generally a fine of some small amount, if the person was the fortunate possessor of any money, otherwise so many hours or days were to be spent in making baskets that could be sold in the market of Roseau, or working for a certain length of time in tilling the soil of the royal garden. Any capital offense was looked up and tried by the Colonial Government, but these were very rare. There had been but one murder committed on the reservation during the past twenty years.

One morning early I started out with Jean Baptiste Pierre for the mountain forests way back of Mahoe, in pursuit of that rare sport, hunting the wild hog. It was to be my first experience, but my guide was an old hand at the business. The hogs of Dominica are not as fierce as those of some of the other West Indian Islands, but are by far the largest, and with tusks on them that would make interesting work for the one who brought them to bay. We were to go a certain distance on horseback, rest awhile, and go the remainder of the way on foot, accompanied by another Carib and two good dogs. We were each armed with a rifle, revolver, and a hunting knife about two feet in

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length, which could be used as a weapon, but is more generally used to cut away the undergrowth or canebrake, which obstructs one's way through the forest.

After a ride of about two hours, we came to a little hut on the border of the forest. There we tied our horses, and found in waiting with his dogs our Carib guide, a tall, raw-boned fellow not far from sixty, clad in a shirt and linen breeches that one time might have been white. On his head he wore the remains of a straw hat, on his feet nothing. Despite his looks, however, we succeeded in getting an excellent cup of coffee, some nice cakes and fried plantain at his cabin. After thus refreshing ourselves and taking a short rest, we proceeded on our journey, pushing into the interior of the forest on the northeastern part of the reservation. The walking was difficult, as the undergrowth was very hard to penetrate, and the progress was necessarily slow. After an hour and a half of such traveling our guide informed us that we were approaching the ground and, with ordinary luck, ought soon to see our game. I was beginning to feel a little discouraged, for after such hard walking I was very much fatigued and, seeing no game, was not in the best of spirits. We were soon, however, to be rewarded for our patience. Having gone a short distance further, we

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came upon an open space in the forest, and there, right before us, not more than twenty rods distant, were two immense wild hogs, a boar and sow. The dogs immediately rushed forward, and a moment later the startled hogs were running as fast as their legs could carry them. "We will lose them," I cried, and in the excitement involuntarily raised my rifle, intending to fire. "Hold!" shouted Jean Baptiste; "don't waste your shot. Come on!"

We hastened forward after the dogs, and then I found to my surprise that the hogs, as soon as they reached the further end of the clearing, turned at bay, with their backs against a large gum tree. I had fully expected that they would rush out of sight in the undergrowth, and that we would lose our game. But it looked very favorable for us to have all the game we wanted before we were through with them, for they stood gnashing their teeth and tearing up the ground with their tusks, plainly showing their rage at being disturbed. When within about thirty feet, Jean Baptiste raised his gun and fired. The bullet struck his victim between the eyes, and he rolled over dead. The other, desperate with rage, made a dart at one of the dogs, and with a blow of his tusks laid the poor cur bleeding on the ground. I raised my gun and fired, but in the excitement missed my



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aim. The infuriated beast, taking me for his would-be destroyer, rushed toward me with savage violence. Dropping my gun, I ran as fast as I could across the clearing, having no desire to be ripped open by those horrible tusks. I had only succeeded in reaching the lower branch of a lime tree and hauling myself up out of reach, when the animal was on the ground below me. There was a cold perspiration all over me, and my heart beat faster than was its wont; but I was out of reach and safe, at all events. The remaining cur seemed afraid to approach the enraged beast since the death of his companion; but Jean Baptiste Pierre and the guide, who, by the way, had no gun, were making their way toward me, keeping as close to the lime trees as possible, that they might find protection if it was necessary. In this way they succeeded in approaching quite near, and Jean Baptiste was fortunate enough to drop the beast at the first shot. I came down from my perch, feeling much more comfortable than a few minutes before.

The hogs were large, weighing, I should think, from three hundred and fifty to four hundred pounds each; I was told that they were often larger, sometimes weighing five and six hundred pounds. The sport is certainly very exciting, although not devoid of danger. Sometimes a herd

## In Old Roseau.

of twenty or thirty will travel together, but they are oftener found in small numbers, from two to four, perhaps, being the average. I have since heard of several instances where an intrepid hunter went alone into the bush, and was kept up a tree all night by an enraged animal. Our guide told us a story, that had a very fishy savor, of a herd of these beasts cutting down a tree with their tusks and killing the unfortunate hunter. The flesh of the wild hog is very good eating, although quite coarse, and not as tender as that of the domestic animal.

## CHAPTER V.

### MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE CARIB INDIANS.—A FEW INCIDENTS.

The Carib Indians have not that stoical indifference, so peculiar to the North American Indians, but rather partake of that jovial disposition common to the African. They are fond of singing and dancing, and play upon an odd-looking instrument, somewhat resembling the French guitar, except the body of the instrument is much larger, and the neck very short. It has, in all, ten gut strings, and is tuned by means of wooden screws.

## In Old Roseau.

Theirs is a weird kind of music, but I found a fascination about it much the same as one finds in some of the wild airs of the Hungarians.

Their dances were a mixture between the Portuguese chamareta and our own waltz. They would begin by gracefully swaying the body to and fro, swinging the arms in midair and snapping the fingers, taking a few steps forward and back, then swinging their partners, making three or four turns, the step being in waltz time.

Almost every evening, when it was moonlight, in some part of the village, I would see these people enjoying themselves with all the freedom and innocence of children, and without the slightest semblance of vulgarity.

At Marcella's earnest opportuning I tried the dance one night with herself for a partner. I knew that my efforts were anything but graceful, but no attempt at ridicule did these people make. They seemed pleased that I entered into their festivities and sought to encourage me by exclamations of approval. Another form of amusement was singing with the guitar accompaniment. Many of them possessed good voices, but their singing was rendered in such a monotonous kind of a way that it really seemed more like a recitation than a song. Oftentimes their pieces were impromptu, and a take-off on some one in the village. When

## In Old Roseau.

this was the case, it was always taken in good part by the individual referred to.

I remember one, it was on Jean Baptiste Pierre, and translated went something in this manner:

Jean Baptiste Pierre thinks he is a very fine fellow,  
With his red sash, hat, shoes and shirt—  
But there are others here that are as good as he  
thinks he is.  
La, La, La, La, La, La—La.

All the cooking among the Caribs is done by means of charcoal, which they manufacture themselves. A small stove is built up of stones, cemented together by mud. In this the charcoal fire is started, and on top of the whole is placed an iron kettle or piece of flat stone, depending on what is to be prepared in the way of food.

Despite such rude methods, the food was exceptionally good. They had a way of preparing fish that gives it a most delicious flavor, and would suit the taste of an epicure. It was first carefully cleaned, then soaked for an hour in fresh lime juice, containing a small quantity of salt, after which it was wrapped in the leaf of the cocoanut, and baked until it was thoroughly done.

One day I sat down to dinner and found on the table before me a most peculiar-looking object, which from its shape and general appearance I was

## In Old Roseau.

at a loss to name. I accepted my portion, however, without asking any questions, and on tasting found it to be of a most delicate flavor. It proved to be the flesh of the porcupine, or hedgehog; Jean Baptiste had been so fortunate as to capture one the night previous, the animal, at the time, being in the act of killing some of his fowls.

Notwithstanding stories to the contrary, the Caribs eat with a knife and fork, and use table furnishings of rough stone pottery, which, for the most part, is purchased in Roseau.

The people as a class are very cleanly. Scarcely a morning but that Marcella and her pretty sister repaired to the little stream we had found it so difficult to cross on our way from church, and there, in a deep pool, disport themselves.

One morning Marcella said to me:

“Would monsieur like to go in ze bath?”

“Perhaps so, Marcella,” I replied; “why?”

“Why! Monsieur, we are going for ze purpose, and it would give us *vary* much *plaisure* to have monsieur accompany us.”

Remembering my experience of the Sunday previous, and not knowing to what extreme their maidenly innocence might influence their conduct, I deferred the invitation under a pretext, which I have now forgotten, until some future time.

## In Old Roseau.

I found some of the Caribs to be fine boatmen. They used canoes made by digging out the trunk of a large tree, and sharp at both ends. Instead of paddles, they used oars, and in these frail vessels they would sometimes venture out miles at sea, going around the island to Roseau, and even had been known to go as far as the neighboring islands of Gaudaloupe and St. Vincent. They are good fishermen, but, strange to say, indulge in this occupation only to the extent of supplying their own people with food.

When a Carib is suffering from toothache he adopts a most singular method for its relief. It is simply snuffing up the nostrils, from the palm of the hand, a little of the clear native rum. Strange to say, this will oftentimes afford immediate relief. If it does not, and the offending member is sufficiently troublesome, it is extracted in the following manner, which, if not thoroughly scientific, is certainly original. Another native takes two small flat sticks, of very hard wood, on whose inner surface are two sets of horizontal grooves. One stick grasps the tooth behind, the other in front, being pressed firmly in place by the thumb and forefinger. A slight rotary movement is made, a quick pull, and lo! the tooth is out and the sufferer goes on his way rejoicing.

The women, aside from their skill in weaving

## In Old Roseau.

baskets, mats and hats from the Mahoe grass, are very deft with the needle, and do some most exquisite embroidery. I have in my possession to-day two beautiful handkerchiefs, the handiwork of Marcella and Louise, that I prize most highly, not alone as a memento of my pleasant sojourn in their midst, but also on account of the peculiar and highly wrought character of the workmanship.

One night I lay in my bed in a half-dreamy condition. I had been tramping around a good deal during the day, and had gotten most thoroughly fatigued, which brought on an attack of nervous headache. I had taken a light supper of cassava cakes and tea, smoked a cigar and retired early. I had found, from experience in those attacks, that my best remedy was rest. In the morning I would be myself again.

During the early part of the night a severe rain-storm set in. I had left my shutters open for ventilation, and when the storm came it beat more or less into the room. Why I did not get up and close the shutters I do not know, possibly because I was in that condition of utter indolence that one occasionally assumes, particularly in the tropics. At all events the fact of a little rain disporting itself about my chamber was something to which I was completely indifferent, and I remained perfectly quiet in bed.

## In Old Roseau.

Suddenly I heard a sound as of some one moving stealthily. A dip had been left burning in the outer room, whose soft, mellow blaze gave out sufficient light for me to dimly discern objects in my own room. I half opened my eyes, but did not move. I heard a light foot-fall approaching, it came nearer; I could distinguish a form; it was a female in some light attire. She stopped by my bedside. It was Marcella. I held my breath. What could the girl be doing in my room at that hour of the night? I knew that she was looking at me. She stood still for a moment, and then passed softly to the window. I saw her reach out, draw the shutters together, and fasten them. Poor girl, thought I, she was fearful lest I get wet. She had the care for me that I had not for myself. Silently she stole back to my bedside. She stopped again, and I saw her bend over the bed. I did my best to feign sleep. I would see what the girl would do. She touched my forehead with her little, soft hand. I read her thoughts—was I feverish? She held it there for a few moments, then, apparently satisfied, removed it. She did not leave at once; she started to go, then hesitated. She bent over my bed, her face drew closer to my own, again she hesitated, but only for an instant; the next moment I felt the light touch of her lips upon my forehead, once, twice, thrice. I could



## In Old Roseau.

stand it no longer. I gave a sudden start. She sprang back, and stood erect in the middle of the room.

"Marcella, is that you?"

"Yes, monsieur."

"Did you—did you kiss me just now, little one?"

"I closed ze shutters, monsieur; it was raining in ze room, and monsieur would get cold, and have ze fever, which would be bad, vary bad, you know, eh!"

"Was that all, Marcella? I must have been dreaming."

"Zat was very possible, monsieur. You feel better of ze head, eh?"

"Yes, Marcella, thank you; but would you mind—?"

"Good night, monsieur, may ze dream be *plaisant*."

What a little witch Marcella was.

## CHAPTER VI.

### A BROKEN REVERIE—MARCELLA'S LOVE- MAKING.—MY DEPARTURE FROM THE LAND OF MAHOE.

The day before my departure from Mahoe I was reclining in the hammock, which I had suspended between two palmetto trees in a little grove

## In Old Roseau.

some distance from the house of Jean Baptiste Pierre. It was a lovely spot, cool and comfortable. Many an hour I spent there, enjoying the quiet beauty of nature and the rest that the spot afforded.

I had thrown down the book that I was reading, and was in a dreamy state of delightful bliss, revolving in my mind the many happy incidents that had transpired since I had first entered into that charming half-vagabond existence that I had led since landing from the steamer in old Roseau, some weeks before. I was nearly asleep, when I was aroused from my reverie by a light foot-fall, and, looking up, I saw standing before me, with smiling face, that pretty little nymph, Marcella.

Seating herself on the ground by my side, with a bundle of the native grass, she commenced work on a hat that she was braiding from the same, and which she had informed me some days before was intended for myself. Neither of us spoke a word. I was again entering upon the land of slumber, when I was aroused by the sound of a voice.

"Monsieur?"

"Yes, Marcella!"

"Zar are many fine ladies in your country?"

"Yes; a good many."

"Zay wear ze fine clothes, live in ze great houses you tell me about, and have many servants?"

## In Old Roseau.

"Some of them live in great houses, wear fine clothes, and have servants; but many, by far the larger part, are poor, and have to work hard to get enough to eat."

"I thought all ze people were rich in America!"

"But a small part are so."

"Have you a lady in your house, monsieur?"

"No! Marcella, I am an old bachelor."

"A what, monsieur? I no understand zat word."

"A man of my age that never has married is called a bachelor," I replied.

"Oh!"

Marcella seemed lost in thought for a moment, then, looking up, she said:

"You no love any girl, monsieur?"

"No, Marcella!"

Again there was silence; my fair inquisitor was evidently at a loss how to proceed.

"I wish, monsieur!"

"You wish what, Marcella?"

"I wish I could go to your country."

"What would you do there, Marcella?"

"Why—" there was a slight hesitation in her voice, and a deeper tinge of color overspread her cheeks—"I would live with you, monsieur."

"That could hardly be, my child; I have no home of my own, besides it would not be considered the proper thing in my country."

## In Old Roseau.

"Not considered ze proper thing, monsieur! Are ze men all so very good in ze land of America zat zay care nothing for ze women unless zay marry, monsieur?" She shrugged her shoulders and gave her head a toss that loosened her magnificent hair from the kerchief that held it lightly, and it fell luxuriously around her dainty neck and shoulders.

"I no believe zat," she continued. "It is not ze nature, as you call it. Ze man in your country and ze man here all ze same, monsieur. It must be so. Ze man here he sometimes marry; maybe not. He love some woman all ze same; she love him. Maybe zay live together all ze time; maybe not. Ze married man he loves young girl, too. Nobody here say not proper, as you call it. What ze harm, monsieur?"

"Things are looked upon differently here than in my country, Marcella."

"You like me, monsieur."

"To be sure I do, Marcella; what a question to ask. I think you and Louise are two fine girls."

"I did not say Louise, monsieur; I said me, Marcella; and could you"—she hesitated a moment, and gazed at me intently from out those great, dark eyes, as though seeking to read my inner thoughts, while a rich crimson color suffused her face and neck—"could you love me a little bit?"

## In Old Roseau.

I must say that I was taken back at the earnest questioning of Marcella and the turn that affairs had taken. She and her sister had been with me more or less during my stay in the settlement, and of late Marcella had seemed to be more attentive to my wants than ever, but I had looked upon her as hardly more than a child, and did not dream of her real affection for me.

“Oh! monsieur,” she continued; “you leave Mahoe to-morrow—do pity poor Marcella. Take me with you. I do not ask to be your wife, zat would be impossible. You no marry poor Carib girl. I will be your slave. Anything you wish, monsieur; only take me with you. You do not love me, but you can like me one little bit. I love you, monsieur, so much.”

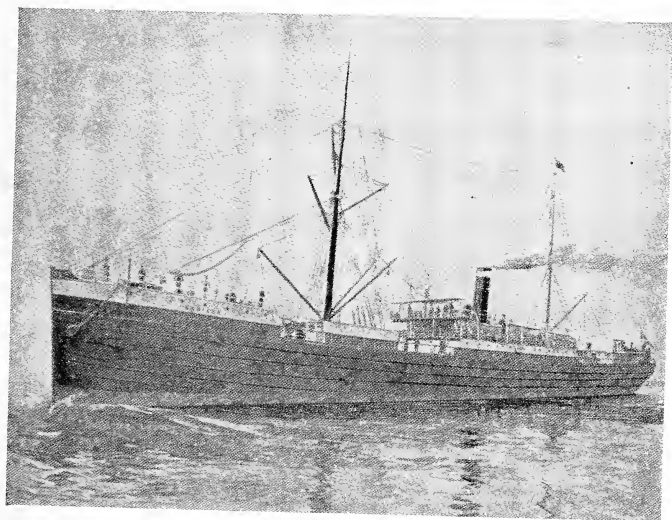
Her bosom heaved with emotion, and throwing her arms around my neck, she pressed her warm cheek against my own, her raven tresses hanging in reckless profusion around us both. I will not attempt to describe what transpired during the next few moments. How I tried in vain to reason with her, telling how different from her own were the ways and customs of the American people. How the climate was bleak and cold. How she would soon wither and pine like a tropical flower transplanted from the warmth and sunshine of its own heather. It was of no avail and, finally, when

## In Old Roseau.

I disengaged her arms from about my neck, she flung her quivering form upon the ground and wept as if her heart would break. I thought it best to let her feelings have sway, and walked away and left her.

I saw no more of her that day. Early the following morning Jean Baptiste Pierre had our horses already saddled and waiting for us to start on our journey back over the mountains to Roseau. I had said good-by to the rest of the family, and we were about to mount, when Marcella appeared. Her lip curled for an instant, but the grief in her heart was stronger than the scorn for an imaginary wrong, and as she grasped my hand she bowed her head and burst into tears. I wished from the bottom of my heart at that moment that I had never seen the family of Jean Baptiste Pierre.

We mounted our horses and started on our homeward journey. At noon that day we stopped for refreshments on the bluff above the river, where I had gotten my first view of the Mahoe land. A half-hour later, as we entered the mountain path and shut out from view the plain we had but lately crossed, I turned my head to get one last glimpse, in the splendor of the noonday sun, of the land of the Caribs.







## CHAPTER VII.

### THE CARRIBEAN ISLANDS AS A HEALTH RESORT.

The Carribean Islands belong to the English, French and Dutch, and are located in the Carribean Sea, within latitude  $10^{\circ}$  to  $19^{\circ}$  north, and longitude west from Greenwich  $60^{\circ}$  to  $63^{\circ}$ . They extend from the northeastern coast of South America, about as far north as the Island of San Domingo. The climate for the whole year will average no warmer than New York State during the summer months.

There is never any frost, and though the weather during the summer months is quite warm, one does not feel the heat nearly so much as in New York city during the same time. During the greater part of the year the thermometer will not rise above  $88^{\circ}$  or  $90^{\circ}$ , and the heat is then tempered by the cool trade winds which prevail at all seasons. To avoid the discomforts of the hottest weather, most of the well-to-do inhabitants have country seats in the mountains, where, ascending to an elevation, almost any climate can be obtained. The principal islands desirable for the invalid to visit are St. Eustatius, St. Kitts, Antigua, Dominica, Martinique, St. Lucia and Trini-

## In Old Roseau.

dad. A place may be easily selected to meet the requirements of the individual, whether it is for quietness and seclusion alone, or for the convenience of our Northern cities. Both Barbadoes and Trinidad have steam railways, and in the latter island the city, Port-of-Spain, is lighted by electric lights. The soil of all the islands is rich, and with little cultivation will produce three or four crops a year. They are nearly all of volcanic formation, and one of the mountains of Dominica rises to a height of about 7,000 feet above the sea level. Nearly every foot of the Island of Barbadoes is under cultivation, while in Dominica probably less than one-third is cultivated. The streets in all the towns are kept very neat, much more so than in our own country, and well lighted. The police force in the various islands is well organized, and excellent order prevails. The roads in most of the islands are good, and it is a pleasure to ride over them, good horses being always obtainable.

In St. Eustatius and Dominica the roads outside of the towns are but poorly adapted to carriage riding, and one must either go on horseback or afoot.

There is very little sickness in any of the islands. Fever or epidemic of any kind seldom prevails. Dr. Nichols, a prominent physician of Dominica, stated that during a residence of fourteen years

## In Old Roseau.

he had never met with a case of diphtheria, yellow fever, or typhoid. Lung diseases are very rare, and are in most cases confined to the poorer class of blacks, who bring them on, as they do other disease, by exposure and neglect. In no other climate could they enjoy, with such impunity, the life they lead in these islands. In most cases they are poorly clad, sleep on the bare earth, for their huts rarely contain a board floor, and are given to the excessive use of alcoholic drinks.

The annual death rate of Dominica will average only about one and six-tenths per cent. of the population, which is less than that of any State in the Union. It would seem that the immunity from disease is almost remarkable. The quarantine regulations of these islands are very thorough, and small-pox and kindred diseases seldom occur. Excellent physicians are to be found in most of the islands, men who have received their degrees abroad, and are well qualified in the various branches of their profession. So far as medical treatment is concerned, the invalid need feel no care. The inhabitants are very hospitable, and good society may be found among a cultured class of people. Fruit is abundant, and of such variety and quality as would tempt an epicure. Excellent facilities are offered for fresh and salt water bathing. The various sulphur springs may be utilized

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for bathing purposes. Those fond of boating can find ample opportunity to gratify their taste. Sail and rowboats can be hired for a nominal price.

The waters abound with a large variety of fish, and the mountain forests with game, so that those who wish to may indulge in these sports to their heart's content.

The winter climate of the Carribean Islands, taken as a whole, has been found beneficial to persons who have a predisposition to pulmonary complaints, and to those in the early stage of consumption, and almost any form of chronic inflammation of the respiratory mucus membrane, such as the different forms of catarrh, bronchitis and some cases of asthma. Much benefit may also be derived in chronic rheumatism, gout, general debility and enfeeblement of the general system from overwork, worry, etc. In these latter cases, much may be expected, for in this climate a person need not expend his vital energies in trying to keep warm. Nature will reassert herself and work the cure. The very atmosphere seems to diffuse a feeling of contentment, and the invalid has only to lie back and enjoy the tranquility which everywhere surrounds him. "Throw physic to the dogs!" A sojourn among these islands is better by far than medicine.

The distance from New York to St. Christo-

## In Old Roseau.

pher's is only six days by steamer, so that no one need be deterred from making the trip. Forty-eight hours out, the air is warm and balmy. No outside wraps are necessary. One already begins to feel the change. By the time the islands are reached the patient is generally, both mentally and physically, in a condition to enjoy every hour of his sojourn in the tropics.

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